

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 /055 W

-----310807Z 083396 /13

P R 310654Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2961

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 2585

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR KS US

SUBJ: PAK ON TROOP WITHDRAWAL, SELF-RELIANCE, SELF-DETERMINATION,  
CAUTIOUS BUT NO RELAXATION

REF: (A) SEOUL 2148 (DTG 160923Z MAR 77),

(B) SEOUL 2432 (DTG 260511Z MAR 77)

SUMMARY: IN SPEECH AT MILITARY ACADEMY GRADUATION CEREMONY  
MARCH 29, PRESIDENT PAK COMMENTED EXTENSIVELY ON U.S. TROOP  
WITHDRAWAL AND RELATED SECURITY ISSUES, IN GREATER DETAIL  
AND MORE CRITICALLY THAN IN EARLIER ROKG STATEMENTS. (REF A) SPEECH  
REFLECTED CONCERN OVER TROOP ISSUE, IN KOREAN AND  
REGIONAL CONTEXTS, WHILE REITERATING, SOMEWHAT MORE  
CAUTIOUSLY THAN BEFORE, CONFIDENCE THAT ROK WILL BE ABLE TO  
DEFEND ITSELF. PAK WARNED NORTH AGAINST ADVENTURES AND  
RENEWED APPEAL FOR RESUMPTION OF TALKS. HE STRESSED  
DETERMINATION TO CHART INDEPENDENT COURSE DOMESTICALLY.  
GENERAL IMPRESSION WAS DOOR. END SUMMARY.

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1. PRESIDENT PAK'S ANNUAL SPEECHES AT KOREAN AIR FORCE  
AND MILITARY ACADEMY GRADUATIONS MARCH 29 AND 30 HAVE BEEN  
FEATURED IN ALL SEOUL MEDIA. FOLLOWING ARE MAIN POINTS  
MORE SIGNIFICANT KMA SPEECH TAKEN FROM PRESS SOURCES.

2. PAK RE-AFFIRMED "DETERMINATION TO EXPLORE OUR OWN  
FATE OURSELVES BECAUSE WE ARE THE MASTERS OF THIS COUNTRY,

NO ONE ELSE." HE URGED CONTINUED EFFORTS AT SELF-RELIANCE IN DEFENSE AND THE ECONOMY, WARNING AGAINST INCREASED PROTECTIONISM BY DEVELOPED NATIONS, AND INTENSIFICATION OF CONFLICT IN THE WORLD AT LARGE WITH "THE 'ATMOSPHERE OF DETENTE' IN RETREAT."

3. PAK REMARKED "COUNTRIES SURROUNDING US APPEAR TO BE SEARCHING FOR NEW FOREIGN POLICIES THESE DAYS, IN ACCORD WITH CHANGES IN THEIR INTERNAL LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE." THE ISSUE OF U.S. GROUND FORCE WITHDRAWAL, HE SAID, "COULD AFFECT PEACE ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA, STABILITY IN NORTH-EAST ASIA, AND EVEN THE BALANCE OF POWER AMONG THE BIG NATIONS IN THE FUTURE." HE WARNED THAT THE COMMUNISTS, ESPECIALLY NORTH KOREA, WILL FEEL ENCOURAGED TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE SITUATION AND THAT NORTH KOREAN DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL PROBLEMS MAY PROMPT THEM TO UNDERTAKE NEW EXTERNAL ADVENTURES. HE PREDICTED THAT "THE NEXT FOUR OR FIVE YEARS WILL BE CRUCIAL FOR THE NORTH-SOUTH CONFRONTATION."

4. PAK STRESSED ON THE OTHER HAND AS HE DID A COUPLE OF WEEKS AGO (REFTELS) THAT THE ROK HAS BEEN PREPARING FOR U.S. TROOP WITHDRAWAL SINCE THE END OF THE 1960S, THAT ROK STRENGTH IS INCREASING, AND THAT IT WOULD SURPASS NORTH KOREA IN ALL FIELDS IN THE 1980S. HE SAID NORTH KOREAN HOPES OF COMMUNIZING THE PENINSULA ARE UNREALISTIC AND THAT THE NORTH MUST RECOGNIZE THAT THE KOREA OF TODAY IS NOT WHAT IT ONCE WAS; HE RENEWED HIS CALL FOR THE NORTH TO RE-OPEN THE NORTH-SOUTH DIALOGUE AND ACCEPT THE ROK PRO-CONFIDENTIAL

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POSAL FOR A NONAGGRESSION PACT.

5. PAK CONCLUDED BY REITERATING "THE DAYS OF DEPENDING ON OTHERS FOR OUR NATIONAL DEFENSE ARE GONE. OUR LAND.... MUST BE DEFENDED BY US AND OUR FATE MUST BE EXPLORED AND DECIDED BY OURSELVES."

6. IN SPEECH TO AIR FORCE ACADEMY GRADUATES MARCH 30, PAK REPEATED STRESS ON NEED FOR INDEPENDENT DEFENSE POSTURE IN FACE OF NORTH KOREAN THREAT AND INTERNATIONAL TENSIONS. SPEECH WAS FAR LESS POINTED THAN PREVIOUS DAY'S EFFORT AND MADE NO REFERENCE TO U.S. OR TROOP WITHDRAWAL ISSUE.

7. COMMENT: WHILE CONTINUING TO TAKE THE POSITIVE, CONFIDENCE-BUILDING LINE PAK SET OUT IN PREVIOUSLY PUBLICIZED REMARKS, KMA SPEECH WAS MORE DOUR, REFLECTING MORE OPEN IRRITATION AT U.S. APPROACH AND A SOMEWHAT MORE CAUTIOUS RECOGNITION OF THE DANGERS PRESENTED BY TROOP WITHDRAWAL. WE READ IT PARTLY AS RECOGNITION BY PAK THAT IN HIS EARLIER STATEMENTS HE MAY

HAVE GOTTEN TOO FAR OUT IN FRONT OF THE ROK PUBLIC'S DEEP  
CONCERNS ABOUT TROOP WITHDRAWAL AND AS A TACTICAL SHIFT TO A  
MORE CREDIBLE PUBLIC POSITION. IT WAS ALSO UNDOUBTEDLY  
MEANT TO BE A MESSAGE OF CAUTION AND CONCERN TO US, AND A  
RE-AFFIRMATION OF PAK'S STRICT DOMESTIC POLICIES.  
STERN

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## Message Attributes

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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009